

## Justice Cunningham Visits Christian County

Justice Bill Cunningham of the First Supreme Court District capped off a day in Christian County by speaking to the Christian County Fraternal Order of Police on Tuesday night, July 8th.

Justice Cunningham, who is also an author of various regional history tomes, met with numerous friends and officials throughout the day, including Circuit Court Clerk Gary Haddock; Circuit Judges Andrew Self and John Atkins; and former Circuit Judge Ed White, a long time friend. After attending the Rotary Club luncheon as a guest of Circuit Clerk Haddock, he conferred privately with close friends, County Attorney Mike Foster, and Mayor of Hopkinsville, Dan Kemp. Taking time out of his day for some local history, Justice Cunningham was also a guest of Henry and Lisa Gould in their historic home, the Caskey place, on Pembroke Road. The house was built in 1835.

"It is important that public officials at every level stay in close touch with the people who put them there," Cunningham stated, "Judges and justices must not become isolated. Otherwise, their decisions become detached from reality."

In his talk to the FOP, the former Circuit Judge and Commonwealth Attorney thanked the group for their support in his 2006 campaign for the state's highest court. He also explained the makeup of the Supreme Court, its decision making procedure, and how cases are heard. As a former Commonwealth Attorney and law enforcement officer, he reminded them that he based his decisions on what he thought was right. And while his decisions may not always please them, he would always make decisions while fully understanding and appreciating the many problems and frustrations of law enforcement officers on the streets.

Lastly, the 35 year veteran of the criminal justice system warned the gathering of law enforcement officers to guard against burnout and the bad things that can bring. "Do not surrender ground to the criminal," he admonished, "Do not become so frustrated that you start pushing the envelope and violating the law yourself, even if you do not necessarily agree with the law. Otherwise, you become just like them." A presentation was made of an autographed photograph of the state Supreme Court to the FOP President, Henry Gould.

The First Supreme Court District represents most all of west Kentucky, covering an area from the Mississippi River all the way east to Mammoth Cave.